

REMARKS

Claims 1, 30 and 53 are amended. Claims 1-4 and 7-77 are in the application for consideration.

Independent claims 1, 30 and 53 are amended to recite the treating of the outer surface with a basic fluid comprising at least one of tetramethyl ammonium hydroxide and ammonium fluoride. Applicant's previous dependent claims reciting tetramethyl ammonium hydroxide were rejected over a combination of U.S. Patent No. 6, 582,861 to Buxbaum et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,956,980 to Nagata et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,844,131 to Oberlander et al. Applicant's dependent claims directed to ammonium fluoride were rejected over a combination of the Buxbaum et al. and Nagata et al. patents identified above, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,350,560 to Sahbari. Applicant disagrees with such previous rejections and requests reconsideration.

Specifically, Oberlander et al. is relied upon for treating the claimed outer surface with tetramethyl ammonium hydroxide. However, under no stretch of the imagination does Oberlander et al. disclose doing so in any manner where photoresist is subsequently deposited thereover, nor would a person of skill combine the Oberlander et al. teachings with Buxbaum et al. or Nagata et al. The Examiner relies upon col.14, Ins.2-15 where an Example 1A is disclosed. However, Example 1A (col.13, In.55 - col.14, In.15) apparently refers to the provision of material "a)" identified in col.13, Ins.35-37, namely formation of an antireflective coating. The stated purpose

of the language upon which the Examiner relies is to check "the solvent resistance of the polymer coating". In other words, the intent is to determine the degree to which the polymer coating resists etching by the developer solution used to develop the photoresist. One of the stated developer solutions tested was tetramethyl ammonium hydroxide (col.14, Ins.10-11).

Under no conceivable stretch of the imagination would testing an antireflective coating to determine its resistance to etch by a developer solution suggests application of that developer solution onto the antireflective coating prior to providing a photoresist layer thereover. Accordingly, it is inconceivable that a person of skill in the art would look to Oberlander et al. and be lead to treat an antireflective coating with a tetramethyl ammonium hydroxide developer or other solution prior to the application of a photoresist layer. For at least this reason, Oberlander et al. does not teach pre-treating an antireflective coating with tetramethyl ammonium hydroxide, and a combination of Oberlander et al. with the other Examiner-cited references would not lead a person of skill in the art to select tetramethyl ammonium hydroxide as a photoresist pre-application treatment. A person of skill in the art would not be led to apply the relied upon teachings of Oberlander et al. with Buxbaum et al. and Nagata et al. where Oberlander et al. is only disclosing a test to determine if an antireflective coating will be etched by a particular developer solution. A person of skill is not led by Oberlander et al. to try a developer solution as a pre-treatment of an antireflective coating in either of the Buxbaum et al. and

Nagata et al. teachings. Accordingly, the Examiner's rejection in this regard is seen to be in error, and independent claims 1, 30 and 53, as reciting tetramethyl ammonium hydroxide, should be allowed. Action to that end is requested.

Regarding the Sahbari patent, such discloses polymer stripper compositions to remove photoresist or antireflective coatings, with one of such being ammonium fluoride. Accordingly, such reference teaches a person of skill in the art to use ammonium fluoride to remove an antireflective coating. Yet, an antireflective coating is highly desirable in the context of Buxbaum and Nagata et al. at least because of the disclosed inherent use for its antireflective effects. It is improper to combine references where doing so would defeat the purposes of one of the references. Combining the teachings of Sahbari with either Buxbaum or Nagata et al. teaches the removal of the very antireflective coating disclosed to be received beneath the photoresist in Buxbaum or Nagata et al. This thereby teaches away from the combination of utilizing ammonium fluoride for any purposes as a pre-treatment to an antireflective coating where the antireflective coating is to remain beneath a subsequently deposited photoresist layer. Accordingly for at least these reasons, the Examiner's combination of Sahbari with Buxbaum et al. and Nagata et al. with respect to ammonium fluoride is misplaced, and should be withdrawn. Thereby, the combinations of the references which the Examiner has made do not render

obvious Applicant's amended independent claims 1, 30 and 53, and such be allowed. Action to that end is requested.

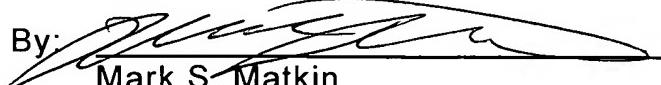
Applicant's dependent claims should be allowed as depending from allowable base claims, and for their own recited features which are neither shown nor suggested in the cited art. Action to that end is requested.

On December 1, 2005, a Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) and Form PTO-1449 were submitted. Copies of the art cited therein were not included as they were all U.S. Patents. The undersigned does not believe any of the prior art references cited in that December 1, 2005 Supplemental IDS have been initialed by the Examiner, as the undersigned has not received an Examiner-initialed Form PTO-1449. Therefore, copies of said December 1, 2005 Supplemental IDS and Form PTO-1449 are resubmitted herewith along with a copy of the PTO-stamped postcard indicating receipt of said Supplemental IDS. It is hereby requested that the Examiner consider the submitted art and initial the same and print them on the face of the patent.

This application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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